

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." "I think I can; I think I can." Most people in the world have heard these phrases at some point in his or her life. Both of these quotes can be used to demonstrate the idea of perseverance. Perseverance is endurance, patience, and "hanging in there" in spite of obstacles, adversity, or suffering.

Climbing up the hill in Bukit Timah might seem easy for many of us. On my birthday, my father decided to bring me to the top of that hill to have a picnic. He told me to meet him at the top of the hill at a shelter as he wanted to see if I had grown more independent since it was my birthday. I had to carry a backpack that weighed almost 20 kilograms, up and down the hill. At first, it was easy. The 'training' that I had while lugging our heavy school bags to school certainly paid off. For the first ten minutes, everything was going smoothly. However, it started raining. Trickle of raindrops slowly turned into larger raindrops before it started pouring. I did not know whether I should turn back or continue ahead. As the raindrops pelted down, I could not really think properly. All I thought was to reach the shelter right at the top.

As fast as I could, I climbed the slippery stone steps. I was too engrossed in keeping the water from going into my eyes that I did not notice a gap between the stones and hence my leg got caught in it. The sharp edges of the rocks cut deep into my flesh and very soon, red blood gushed out of the wounds. I howled in pain, hoping that someone heard me and would come to my help. Unfortunately, the rain drowned my cries for help. I did not want to be stranded in the cold, wet weather. I decided to persevere, till I reach the shelter where I could attend to my wounds in a safer environment. In my head, "I think I can, I think I will, yes I will reach the top, never say never!" this strengthened me mentally.

The wound was really painful and with every step I took, I winced. I finally inched my way up to the shelter after about twenty long minutes (it felt like hours) and dad tended to my wound. Munching happily on the sandwiches that I painfully carried up in my backpack, they indeed tasted nicer than usual. The taste of success, perseverance. Although it was only a trip to the top of the hill, I had learnt what was perseverance.

Perseverance is not just an attitude. It is a way of life. It is the overcoming of any disadvantages that stand in our way. It is the standing up every time one gets knocked down. It is the being persistent in obtaining one's goal, and it is the searching for opportunities to overcome obstacles that we face. Perseverance is a quality that we should all want to attain. It is useful in all aspects of life: spiritually, physically, mentally, and socially. Whether we see it straight from the Bible or from Aesop's Fables, we can see just how important it is for all of us to have.